

Commercial Perfins of Australia: A Review

After a gestation period of some years this catalogue will be available from March 1992: Based on an initial listing by Joe Purcell from Canada the listing has been much developed, re-organised and expanded, so that it now bears little resemblance to the initial work. The compilers John Grant and John Mathews have produced a clear, useful and significant perfin catalogue with a number of innovations.

The catalogue illustrates and lists some 1,500 patterns found on the postal and revenue issues of the Australian States and Commonwealth. For each pattern the users identity where known (65% of patterns), period of usage, whether on postal/revenue issues, on which State and/or on Commonwealth stamps, a provisional rarity rating is provided.

Innovations include:

1) The catalogue numbering system only distinguishes between patterns with the same set of initials (ignoring stops and number of lines) which is a departure from the more normal sequential numbering used for each letter in most catalogues. This system allows for the inclusion of new patterns with great ease and without using a complex numbering system. Only use will determine how successful this is.

2) The catalogue has some 70 pages of background information which in this case is not only desirable but essential. The listings for the Victorian 'pin punctures' are limited to representative patterns much as the Sloper provisionals in the British catalogue. Part of the background information includes an explanation of these patterns, representative alphabets and a history of the known suppliers. Other background information includes details of legislation, archival records relating to applications and approvals, a bibliography detail of the perforator manufacturers and illustrations of some perforators. A very interesting and useful part of this book.

3) A list of possible user identities and addresses. As proving covers do not always provide the user name but only the address it was thought that such a listing might be useful. Indeed one pattern has been identified since the draft was finalised using this list.

Nine patterns are illustrated on each page with the associated information which allows a significant amount of information for each pattern. Catalogue illustrations are clear and the layout is easy to follow.

This is an essential volume for collectors of both Australian and Worldwide perfins.

COMMERCIAL PERFINS OF AUSTRALIA compiled by John Grant and John Mathews 1992, approx 300 pages, A4 soft cover perfect bound with section stitching is available from:

John Grant & John Mathews, PO Box 3111 Weston Creek, ACT 2611 AUSTRALIA. Price: A\$28-50 postpaid within Australia. Non Australian addresses add extra postage - Airmail - add A\$10-00 - Surface mail - add A\$5-00.

Pre-publication orders with payment received by 15th Feb 1992 are only A\$24-00 plus postage. (The Perfin Society have ordered a few copies at this pre-publication price. Delivery is expected in April/May. Please contact Michael if you are interested.)

With 300 A4 pages it must be a bargain at around E12 post paid.

John Mathews, Secretary of the Perfin Club of New Zealand and Australia offers his help to our members for research purposes. Please contact him if you would like to take him up on this. John Mathews, 21 McConnel Crescent, KAMBA, A.C.T. 2902, Australia.

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